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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE

State's Top Economic Development Practitioner Earns Prestigious International Certification

DOVER, Del. (November 11, 2008) – Judy McKinney-Cherry, director of the Delaware Economic Development Office, recently earned the designation of Certified Economic Developer, a recognition that denotes a mastery of principal skills in economic development. The CEcD exam was held in conjunction with the International Economic Development Council's 2008 Annual Conference in Atlanta, Ga.

Fifty-two professionals sat for the CEcD exam held on Saturday, Oct. 18. A rigorous and comprehensive three-part, two-day examination, a total of 17 new CEcDs emerged from the test.

Nominated by Governor Ruth Ann Minner and confirmed by the Senate as the first female cabinet secretary and director of the Delaware Economic Development Office in October 2002, McKinney-Cherry is now the first director of DEDO to hold the prestigious certification. With 16 years of economic development experience, McKinney-Cherry has directed a results-producing strategy for the Office. Working with Governor Ruth Ann Minner, she has increased available capital for economic development initiatives from \$10 million annually to more than \$50 million annually. She has led the team impacting 15 percent of Delaware's workforce (65,000 jobs), directly influencing more than \$1.5 billion of private investment and impacting \$88.5 billion in Delaware's economy over a 5-year period.

The CEcD designation recognizes qualified and dedicated practitioners in the economic development field and sets the standard of excellence within the profession. Candidates must pass the examination, which tests a practitioner's knowledge, proficiency and judgment in the key areas of economic development, including business retention and expansion, marketing, finance, workforce development, community development, real estate, strategic planning, and management. They must also have at least four consecutive years of full-time, paid professional experience in economic development.

As highly competent economic development practitioners, Certified Economic Developers work with public officials, business leaders and community members to create leadership to build upon and maximize the economic development sector. Excellence in the economic development profession improves the well being, quality of life and opportunities for individuals, businesses and communities. There are currently more than 1,100 CEdDs in the United States.

About DEDO

The Delaware Economic Development Office is an executive state of Delaware agency responsible for attracting new investors and businesses to the state, promoting the expansion of existing industry, assisting small and minority-owned businesses, promoting and developing tourism and creating new and improved employment opportunities for all citizens of the State. In spring 2008, DEDO successfully demonstrated excellence in structure, organization, funding, programs and results and was awarded international accreditation as a Certified Economic Development Organization by the International Economic Development Council. The Delaware Economic Development Office is only the second state organization to earn this certification. For more information, visit dedo.delaware.gov.

About IEDC

The International Economic Development Council is the premiere organization for the economic development profession. Serving more than 4,500 members, IEDC is the world's largest professional membership organization providing a diversity of economic development services, including research and advisory services, conferences, professional development and legislative tracking. Visit IEDC's Web site at www.iedconline.org for more information.

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